



## Traffic Safety News and Facts for Employers August 21, 2006

### NETS Feature

**DSWW Symposium** ---- The Driver-The Vehicle-The Roadway: Implications for the Future  
Vehicles and roadways are “smarter” and safer than ever before. New safety systems are posed to decrease driver’s workloads and offer assistance in hazardous situations. During the Employer Symposium, The Driver-The Vehicle-The Roadway: Implications for the Future, a panel of experts will showcase the next generation of safety devices and systems available in commercial and private vehicles in the near future. Converging technologies that include the Internet, navigation systems, movies, and gaming are being integrated into vehicles extending communication capabilities from the vehicle to the home and to the office. During the moderator-led “Employer Exchange” discuss the practical challenges and opportunities employers will face in integrating these technological advances into workplace environments. How will these advances impact your driver safety programs? What can employers do to prepare for the future?

More... [http://www.trafficsafety.org/newsletter/symposium\\_081506feat.asp](http://www.trafficsafety.org/newsletter/symposium_081506feat.asp)

### Latest Traffic Safety News

#### **Cell Phone Conversations Reduces Drivers’ Brain Activity**

“Talking on a cell phone while driving sharply reduces brain activity needed to keep track of road conditions and leads drivers to gaze at things without their brains actually seeing them”, according to David Strayer, a psychologist at the University of Utah. Hands-free phones pose the same safety hazards as handheld phones according to Strayer. The brain has a limited capacity for attention, so whatever is siphoned off by a phone conversation is subtracted from attention for driving, he says. His findings were based on laboratory studies using driving machines with about 500 adults. For further information, [www.psych.utah.edu/AppliedCognitionLab](http://www.psych.utah.edu/AppliedCognitionLab)

Source: USA TODAY, August 14, 2006.

#### **Speed Cameras: An Effectiveness And Policy Review**

The Texas Transportation Institute has released a report that examines the role of illegal speed in traffic crashes, the role of speed cameras in reducing speeding, and the safety effectiveness of speed cameras. The report also explores implementation issues associated with photographic enforcement of speed limits. Source: TRB

#### **PHH Survey Finds Telematics Surge In Private Truck Fleets**

America’s private truck fleets are increasingly employing telematics to help drive down the cost of doing business, according to industry leaders responding to a survey commissioned by PHH FirstFleet. The survey of private truck fleets revealed that 60 percent of fleet managers said they are adopting the devices to track equipment status and driver activities. Seventy-nine percent said they were installing the technology in 75 to 100 percent of their fleet, with 42 percent reporting the main concern was to track delivery times. Thirty-nine percent of the respondents indicated they wanted to optimize routes and fuel management, and 38 percent thought their drivers would perform better and drive more responsibly if they knew they were being monitored. For a full summary of the PHH First Fleet National Survey of Fleet Managers, visit [www.phhfirstfleet.com](http://www.phhfirstfleet.com)



### **Reducing Alcohol-Impaired Driving Crashes Through Social Marketing**

There has been little decrease in the number of alcohol-related driving fatalities over the past decade. During this time most interventions have been educational or legal. This paper presents the results of a field experiment that used social marketing to introduce a new ride program into three rural communities. Almost all people in the 21-34-year-old target know that they should not drive while impaired, and most agree it is not a good thing to do, but for many the opportunity to behave properly does not exist. The Road Crew program was developed using new product development techniques and implemented by developing broad coalitions within the communities. A key feature of the program included rides to, between, and home from bars in older luxury vehicles. Results showed a significant shift in riding/driving behavior, especially among 21-34-year olds, a projected 17% decline in alcohol-related crashes in the first year, no increase in drinking behavior, and large savings between the reactive cost of cleaning up after a crash and the proactive cost of avoiding a crash. Programs have become self-sustaining based on fares and tavern contributions, and have become part of the life style in the treatment communities.

Source: Rothschild ML, Mastin B, Miller TW. Accident Analysis Prevention, 2006

### **Unintended Speeding To Become A Thing Of The Past**

Siemens VDO has a system that will make inadvertent speeding a thing of the past. A camera constantly scans the road ahead and can recognize speed limits on traffic signs. If a driver is speeding, he is warned by a conveniently visible signal on the head-up display for instance, or the speed set on the adaptive cruise control function can be automatically adjusted. The system can go into series production in 2008. Further information is available at <http://www.siemensvdo.com/press>

### **Blind Spot Systems Heading for Showrooms Near You**

More cars are being equipped with blind spot systems to help drivers switch lanes safely by detecting vehicles in side blind spots. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that 136,000 people are injured each year in lane changing-related incidents with some 762,000 vehicles involved. Source: Wall Street Journal, July 27, 2006

### **GM, Ford, Mazda Integrate iPod Into New Vehicles**

Drivers listening to music while driving will now find it easier to use their iPods. Apple is teaming with GM, Ford and Mazda to integrate iPods into a cars audio system. Automakers are making it easier for drivers to access a variety of gadgets. Sales of iPods and other mp3 players are expected to grow from 58 million units last year to 132 million in 2009. <http://www.apple.com/ipod/>

### **ATRI Conducting Survey On Certification Programs Within CMV Companies**

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI) is working to gain a better understanding of the concept of safety culture and views on certification programs within CMV companies. The first of these topics will focus on overall company attitudes and practices regarding safety, while the second will inquire about experiences with safety certification programs. ATRI is asking for feedback in this study from companies who operate commercial motor vehicles. For further information and survey page, [http://www.atri-online.org/survey/combined\\_safety/combined\\_safety.html](http://www.atri-online.org/survey/combined_safety/combined_safety.html)

### **Air Bag Fraud, A Serious Issue Often Goes Undetected**

According to James Quiggle, from the Coalition Against Insurance Fraud (CAIF) there are 50,000 to 75,000 airbag thefts annually. Unless the airbag covers in the vehicles are removed there is no way to know they are gone. With no federal laws on the books, airbag fraud is becoming a runaway scam. Airbag fraud can affects fleets when body work is done on light duty vehicles. There are several types of fraud: false airbags—a false airbag cover is placed on an empty cavity, a recycled airbag is used



instead of a new one, and a crooked body shop can stage an airbag deployment. Ford has created a database of the serial numbers of all of the airbags they have placed in cars. For further information, <http://www.insurancefraud.org/>

### **ESC The Next Great Safety Device**

After seat belts, Electronic Stability Control (ESC) is set to enter into automotive history, as the second most beneficial safety device. Effectiveness confirmed by studies, NHTSA says ESC reduces crash incidence by 35%. A NHTSA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) is expected to encompass the minimum rollover/loss of control safety standards that will be mandated for new models. When the rule becomes law (presumably, by spring 2007) a phase-in schedule for SUVs and light trucks is most likely to begin in 2008. Ultimately, all vehicles will be required to be equipped with some form of ESC. NHTSA estimates the costs will range from \$300 to \$800 per vehicle, depending upon model and drivetrain configurations. Continental Automotive Systems provides a worldwide listing of manufacturers various marketing names for electronic stability control systems.

### **IIHS Moves To Side-Impact Crashes**

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), well-known for the slow-motion frontal offset crash videos on national television is now focusing more on side-impact collisions as carmakers routinely earn good frontal ratings. IIHS publishes crash test ratings: good, acceptable, marginal or poor. A vehicle rated good means the driver could walk away from the collision without any serious injury. In a poor-rated vehicle, there's a high likelihood of very serious injury or of death. For further information, <http://www.iihs.org>

### **Baby Boomer Motorcyclists Hit the Road--Literally**

Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration indicates that motorcyclists between 40 and 49 years of age had a 140% increase in fatalities from 1997-2004, with only 25% of these fatalities due to increased ridership. As the motorcycle industry continues to report record sales 14 years in a row, the industry and the government are looking to curb a rising number of injuries and deaths. They're encouraging motorcyclists to ride sober, wear protective gear such as helmets, take training courses and get licensed. Older riders are advised to take experienced rider classes. Source: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, <http://www.aaafoundation.org>

### **News from the USDOT**

#### **2006 Impaired Driving Enforcement Crackdown Begins**

Wednesday, August 16th, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will launch the 2006 impaired driving high visibility enforcement crackdown. Launching with a new theme — Drunk Driving. Over The Limit. Under Arrest. — this year's crackdown will run from August 18 through September 4. The crackdown will be backed by extensive high-visibility enforcement efforts in the field and highly targeted messaging developed to resonate with all motorists, especially the demographic most at risk — 21 to 34 year-old males. TV and radio spots showcasing the new, stronger crackdown theme will begin airing nationally August 16 to inform as many people as possible about the serious consequences of driving while impaired. In addition, the campaign includes a TV and radio spot designed to more effectively reach the Spanish speaking audience. View the spots at, <http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org/tools-campaignheadquarters.htm>

**Hill Confirmed As FMCSA Administrator**

On August 3rd, John Hill was confirmed by the Senate as the next Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). Hill served as the FMCSA's chief safety officer and assistant administrator since 2003. Prior to coming to FMCSA, Mr. Hill was a member of the Indiana State Police from 1974-2003, where he served as the commercial vehicle enforcement division commander from 1989 to 1994 and from 2000 to 2003. Mr. Hill is a 1973 graduate of Taylor University with a BA degree in political science.

**Senate Approves NTSB Appointments**

Mark V. Rosenker was confirmed as the Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Robert L. Sumwalt III was confirmed as a member of NTSB.

**Work-Life****AAA Again Sponsors School's Open---Drive Carefully Campaign**

Drivers are reminded to exercise caution to increase safety when schools open this fall. Suggestions include: keeping vehicle speeds lower, coming to a complete stop at intersections, driving with headlights on, always stopping when buses are loading and unloading, scanning between parked cars and paying attention to crossing guards. For further information view, [www.aaa.com](http://www.aaa.com)

**CHOP Center For Injury Research & Prevention Analyzes Teen Crashes**

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia conducted a 9-month scientific review to analyze teen crashes to assess injury risk and set an agenda. The panel was an international group of experts in education, training, licensing, adolescent behavior, psychology, public health, social marketing legislative policy and engineering. Their findings, The Science of Safe Driving Among Adolescents, are published in the August issue of Injury Prevention. For further information view, [www.chop.edu/injury](http://www.chop.edu/injury)

**Young Night-time UK Drivers At Double Risk Of Death Or Injury**

Despite representing only 10 percent of the total driving population in the UK, young drivers are involved in 28 percent of all crashes where a driver is killed or injured. During August, a new initiative, DriveTime is being launched for 18-25 year old drivers, designed to encourage them not to drive at night, when the chances of them being in a car crash are highest. Insurance company, More Than is offering these motorists discounted car insurance in return for not driving at night during the most dangerous hours on the road (between 11.00 pm and 06.00 am). Drivers who sign up for DriveTime receive a GPS device that will be delivered and installed in their vehicle free of charge. Once installed, whenever the car starts, a message is sent to DriveTime advising the time and place that the journey commenced. A further message is sent when the engine is switched off to confirm that the journey has ended. For further information, email [drivetime@morethan.com](mailto:drivetime@morethan.com) or visit [www.morethan.com/drivetime](http://www.morethan.com/drivetime)

**Online Registration Opens For International Walk To School Day**

Registration is now open for 2006 International Walk to School International Walk to School Day October 4th, an international event where communities from over 35 countries join together to walk and bicycle to school. The National Center for Safe Routes to School of the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center serves as the national coordinating agency for Walk to School activities in the US. Registration is free and available to individuals or organizations holding a Walk to School event. To register a Walk to School event, visit [www.walktoschool.org/register](http://www.walktoschool.org/register)





### **There Is Risk In Your Employees' Loved Ones**

Are your employees' spouses and partners allowed to drive their company cars? You may have run a license check but the likelihood is you have no idea what kind of driver may be taking the wheel of your employee's company vehicle after hours. The concept of spouse driver training is not new but it could pay dividends if it is incorporated as part of your risk management program. It could even form part of your company's employee benefits package, providing a highly worthwhile real-world advantage to both parties which would reinforce a company's 'caring' image.

### **Relation Of Parent-Teen Agreement On Restrictions To Teen Risky Driving Over 9 Months**

The purpose of the study was to determine the relations among parent-teen discordance for restrictions on driving conditions, driving rules, and consequences for rule violations at licensure and subsequent risky teen driving. Parents and teens completed telephone interviews at 1, 4, and 9 months after teens became licensed. At each time interval, the degree of disagreement with parent restrictions on driving conditions was positively associated with teen risky driving. These results demonstrated a positive association between parent-teen discordance for driving conditions and teen risky driving. Initial establishment of restrictions and agreement with them may have longer-term protective effects against teen driving risk.

Source: Beck KH, Hartos JL, Simons-Morton BG. Am J Health Behav 2006; 30(5): 533-43.

### **Factors Influencing Children's Booster Seat Use**

Australia's Monash University Accident Research Centre has released a report that examines the restraint usage rates, 'appropriateness' of restraint use, and the factors that influence appropriate restraint use for children in the booster seat age group. The report is based on a survey of 699 parents from the states of New South Wales and Victoria regarding restraint use by their children aged 4 to 11 years.

### **Australia's Driver Intervention Program**

The Centre for Automotive Safety Research at The University of Adelaide has released a report that explores the operation, content, and delivery of the Driver Intervention Program (DIP). DIP is a 90-minute interactive small group workshop that is designed to address the over-representation of young drivers in crashes by confronting them with the potential risk and consequences of road trauma. The report examines the personality characteristics and driving-related attitudes of DIP participants. Any driver aged 25 years and under who has breached the conditions of his or her South Australian Learner's Permit or Provisional License and has been subsequently disqualified from driving is required to attend a DIP. For further information, <http://casr.adelaide.edu.au/reports/CASR021.pdf>

### **International Traffic Safety News**

#### **China's Highways Among World's Most Dangerous**

According to China's Ministry of Public Security, there were 41,933 traffic-related deaths during the first six months of 2006. The World Health Organization believes that crash-related fatalities are seriously underreported with only about half of the true totals reports since data comes from law enforcement not medical sources.